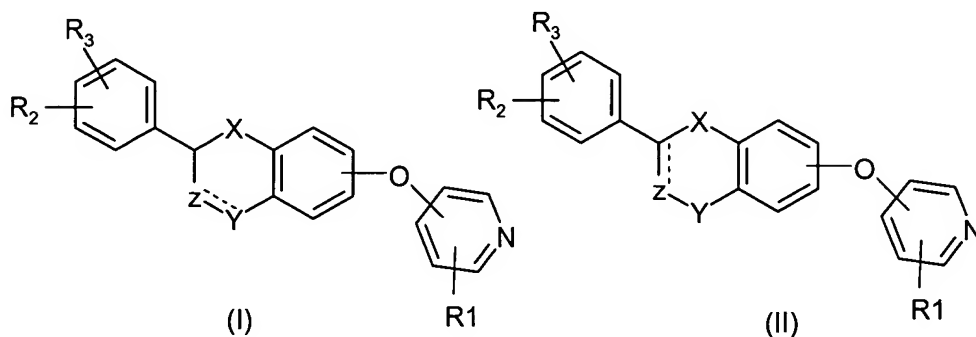


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in this application.

1. (Currently Amended) A compound ~~Compounds~~ of formula (I) or (II):



wherein

X is -O-, -CH₂- or -C(O)-;

Z is -CHR₁₂- or valence bond;

Y is -CH₂-, -C(O)-, CH(OR₁₃)-, -O-, -S-;

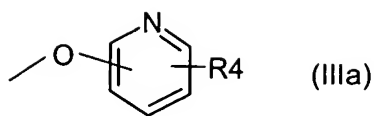
provided that in case Z is a valence bond, Y is not C(O);

the dashed line represents an optional double bond in which case Z is -CR₁₂- and Y is

-CH₂-, -C(O)- or CH(OR₁₀)- (in formula II) or

-CH- (in formula I);

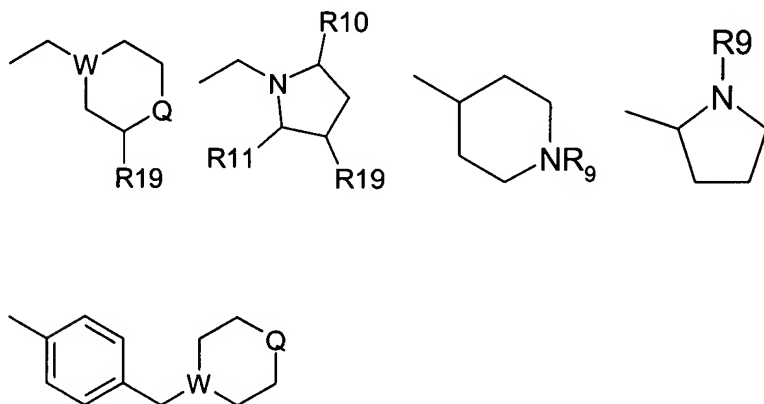
R₂ and R₃ are independently H, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, -NO₂, halogen, -CF₃, -OH, benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa)



R_1 is H, CN, halogen, $-\text{CONH}_2$, $-\text{COOR}_{15}$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{NR}_{15}\text{R}_{18}$, NHC(O)R_5 , NHCH_2R_5 , NHR_{20} , $\text{NR}_{21}\text{R}_{22}$, NHC(NH)NHCH_3 or, in case the compound is of formula (II) wherein the optional double bond exists or in case R_2 or R_3 is benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa) or in case the pyridine ring of formula (I) or (II) is attached to the oxygen atom in 3-, 4- or 5-position, R_1 can also be $-\text{NO}_2$ or $\text{NR}_{16}\text{R}_{17}$;

R_4 is H, $-\text{NO}_2$, CN, halogen, $-\text{CONH}_2$, $-\text{COOR}_{15}$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{NR}_{15}\text{R}_{18}$, $-\text{NR}_{16}\text{R}_{17}$, $-\text{NHC(O)R}_5$ or $-\text{NHC(NH)NHCH}_3$;

R_5 is alkyl substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxy, or carboxyalkyl, in which the alkyl portion is optionally substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxyl, $-\text{CHR}_6\text{NR}_7\text{R}_8$ or one of the following groups:



W is N or CH;

Q is CHR_{14} , NR_9 , S or O;

R_6 is H or lower alkyl;

R₇ and R₈ are independently H, acyl, lower alkyl or lower hydroxyalkyl;

R₉ is H, lower alkyl or phenyl;

R₁₀ and R₁₁ are independently H or lower alkyl;

R₁₂ is H or lower alkyl;

R₁₃ is H, alkylsulfonyl or acyl;

R₁₄ is H, -OH, -COOR₁₅;

R₁₅ is H or lower alkyl;

R₁₆ and R₁₇ are independently H, acyl, alkylsulfonyl, -C(S)NHR₁₈ or -C(O)NHR₁₈;

R₁₈ is H or lower alkyl;

R₁₉ is H or -OH;

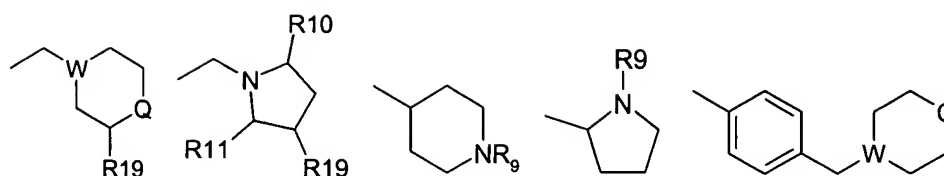
R₂₀ is a pyridinyl group optionally substituted with a -NO₂ group;

R₂₁ and R₂₂ are lower alkyl;

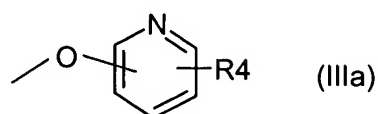
or a ~~and~~ pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester ~~salts and esters~~ thereof.

2. (Original) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R₁ is -NHC(O)R₅, X is O, Y is CH₂ and Z is CHR₁₂.

3. (Original) A compound according to claim 2 wherein Z is CH₂ and R₅ is alkyl substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxy, or carboxyalkyl, in which the alkyl portion is optionally substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxyl, -CHR₆NR₇R₈ or one of the following groups:



4. (Original) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_2 or R_3 is a benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa)



5. (Original) A compound according to claim 4 wherein R_4 is NO_2 .

6. (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim 4 or 5 wherein R_1 is NO_2 .

7. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of claim 1 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

8. (Original) A method for inhibiting $\text{Na}^+/\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange mechanism in a cell, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1.

9. (Original) A method for treating arrhythmias, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1.

10. (New) A compound according to claim 5 wherein R_1 is NO_2 .